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BLACKWELLS ISLANDS BRIDGE NEARING COMPLETION

BLACKWELLS ISLAND
BRIDGE

NEW YORK, March 15.—Blackwell's Island Bridge which spans the East River joining New York with Long Island City is the largest cantilever structure in the world. It was second largest in course of construction up to the time of the collapse of the Quebec bridge, in September last. Its estimated cost when turned over to the city for public traffic has been stated at

between \$16,000,000 and \$20,000,000, including the cost of the property on both sides of the river which had to be condemned for the approaches. As will be seen the structure is nearing completion only two small gaps remaining to be filled joining the shore spans with the central "reach" which is established on Blackwell's Island. The bridge will be opened with appropriate ceremonies.

**HOUSE DISCUSSION
ON PEARL HARBOR**

The following discussion occurred in Congress, on the bringing up of Pearl Harbor Improvements by Congressman Graff, of Illinois:
With reference to the Hawaiian Islands, we realized that the country is greatly interested in Pearl Harbor and its becoming a naval base of the United States, and we all know that while other considerations may have entered into the reasons for our acquisition of the Hawaiian Islands, after all its importance as a strategic base in the midst of the Pacific was the controlling cause.

The question whether we should, during the present year, make appropriations for the fortifications of the entrance to Pearl Harbor came before us and was very carefully considered, and at great length, and we based our conclusions upon the testimony of the officials of the War Department, and those alone. It developed before the hearing was taken that there was no reliable information as to the estimates of cost or amount of excavation which might be made in order to deepen and widen the entrance to Pearl Harbor. We were informed by an official at the Navy Department that in his judgment it would require something like a million and a half cubic yards. Later, by cable, information was sought in the Hawaiian Islands as to what amount of excavation would be required and what would be the probable cost of the improvements to Pearl Harbor. We found that the figures increased as we got nearer to the base where the facts existed, whatever they were.

Mr. Clark of Missouri. I would like to ask the gentleman a question or two. Does the gentleman's committee propose to make a really strong base at Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Graff. We have nothing to do with that, because the committee has no jurisdiction over the subject.

Mr. Clark of Missouri. You are appropriating the money.

Mr. Graff. We are not now appropriating any money for Pearl Harbor except for the purpose of putting in fire control, electrical power, and so forth, to operate a battery of two guns, which exists there already and which is used there now for the incidental protection of Honolulu.

Mr. Clark of Missouri. That was the argument in favor of annexing the Sandwich Islands was that by a proper expenditure of money Pearl Harbor could be made as strong as Gibraltar.

Mr. Graff. I have just said that. Mr. Clark of Missouri. That was the argument they rolled me on when I was fighting the annexation of those islands.

Mr. Graff. I think we all agree with you.

Mr. Clark of Missouri. Now, you have had them for ten years. They said that was the key to the Pacific, that they had to have them for national defense. They have had them for ten years and have never taken any substantial steps to make that place as strong as Gibraltar, or as strong as anywhere else.

Mr. Graff. Does not the gentleman recognize that this committee can have no jurisdiction except for any part of the subject except fortifications, when in logical order comes afterwards, when there is something to fortify?

Mr. Clark of Missouri. That is what I want you to do—to appropriate money enough at this session of Congress. I do not care whether this committee has jurisdiction of it or not, or what committee has jurisdiction of it; I want that committee to appropriate enough money to carry out the statement and promise that enabled the annexationists to down us in 1898 and annex those islands.

Mr. Graff. I want to say to the gentleman from Missouri that there is now pending in the House, reported from the Committee on Naval Affairs by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Bates), a bill which proposes to do

just what the gentleman suggests, carrying a total appropriation of \$750,000, which includes as a start—not a very large start, but a start, nevertheless—upon the improvement of the entrance to Pearl Harbor, the building of a dry dock, the construction of a naval base, and the commencement of the very work which the gentleman has inquired about, but that bill would initiate the work and authorize by law further appropriations.

Mr. Clark of Missouri. I am glad if the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Bates), or somebody else, has waked up.

Mr. Longworth. Is it not also true that land has already been set aside for this naval station?

Mr. Graff. It belongs to the Government. It has been acquired by the Government. Pearl Harbor is undoubtedly one of the greatest harbors in the world for a naval base. It is landlocked, and so situated a fleet could not be observed from the sea, and has an area of 10 square miles; 6 miles in an air line on the west of Honolulu. It is just within the gun range of Honolulu, of this one battery, which has already been established. Captain Mifflin said years ago it was large enough to hold all the navies of the world.

Mr. Longworth. And the question of strengthening, widening, or deepening that channel would be under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Rivers and Harbors?

Mr. Graff. Absolutely.

Mr. Smith of Iowa. If the gentleman will pardon me, while the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Longworth) is correct, that probably it would come under the jurisdiction of the Rivers and Harbors Committee without objection on the part of the Committee on Rivers and Harbors the Naval Committee has frequently made appropriations for the improvement of places intended purely for naval bases, and it is possible an appropriation from that committee would therefore not be subject to a point of order. I trust the gentleman will pardon me for the interruption.

Mr. Graff. It is on that basis that the Bates bill is proposed.

Mr. Smith of Iowa. The only point I wanted to bring was that this particular committee did not have the jurisdiction on the entire improvement of Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Graff. I am anxious to have that brought out, too. Now, I might add here that notwithstanding the objection of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Keifer) as to the size of the estimates for the improvement of the entrance to Pearl Harbor, and its magnitude, that the War and Navy Departments insist upon a depth of 35 feet and a width of 400 instead of 200 feet, and a cutting off of the projections and a straightening of the tortuous entrance which now exists into that body of water.

Mr. Keifer. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask a single question. Is there not generally in the channel now 50 feet of water?

Mr. Smith of Iowa. There is a great depth, undoubtedly.

Mr. Graff. The channel varies in depth. I think there are depths greater than 50 feet. I took a superficial glance at the depth as put upon the map, and I was under the impression that while there was a great deal of deep water it was at varying depths.

Mr. Stephens of Texas. How much land has the United States acquired title to for these fortifications?

Mr. Graff. I do not really know, but a very large amount of land. Indeed, the Government has acquired some of that land for fortification purposes which may be more than will be required for that particular purpose.

Mr. Stephens of Texas. Is there a city laid off adjacent to this property?

there is nothing back of Pearl Harbor save the country—sugar plantations—but there is, as I remember, a trolley line which runs from Pearl Harbor to Honolulu.

Mr. Longworth. I believe it was thought to establish a subdivision at one time. There are streets laid out, and all that.

Mr. Graff. A little premature. Mr. Stephens of Texas. That is what I desire to find out, whether there was a contemplated city. I understand it is proposed to put the lots on the market, and that they are now advertising that fact.

Mr. Graff. I do not know of anything to prevent them from doing so.

Mr. Stephens of Texas. Has the gentleman received any letters or memorials urging that Pearl Harbor should be fortified? I have received several of that kind.

Mr. Graff. I have not received any of those communications, and I would not need any stimulus so far as I am concerned.

Mr. Longworth. My opinion is that this subdivision was laid out at the time the railroad was completed from Honolulu to Pearl Harbor, something like fifteen years ago—something like that. It is a long time.

Mr. Stephens of Texas. It is simply a question as to the facts about this matter, and I was a little curious to know the source of these circulars that have been sent to individual Members of Congress urging great appropriations, and I wondered whether it was for some outside purpose by persons who were interested.

Mr. Graff. I have no doubt the people of Honolulu are interested, outside of the sugar interests, very largely in cultivating their city as a great naval and commercial port. It would be natural for them to take a very deep interest in this great project.

Mr. Kahn. If the gentleman will permit me, I will state that the people of the entire Pacific coast are greatly interested in having Pearl Harbor properly protected with fortifications, and I dare say that all the commercial organizations of the coast have sent out memorials for the purpose of asking that that work be done.

Mr. Stephens of Texas. That possibly is true, because I have received several. I was only anxious to know whether a city was to be built in the immediate vicinity. I was anxious to know whether they sent out the circulars to further that, or whether it was a purely patriotic purpose of theirs.

Mr. Graff. Possibly a patriotic purpose, and patriotism is a species of selfishness as well as heroism, for that matter.

Now, with reference to the Hawaiian Islands, we have provided for the defense of Honolulu with 14-inch guns at Waikiki. It was first proposed by the officials of the War Department that these batteries should be located immediately at Honolulu; but it was found afterwards, according to their opinion, that Waikiki would be the better point for the protection of Honolulu. They propose to have rapid-fire guns at Honolulu Harbor. In addition to that, we provide for fortifications at Diamond Head. On the ex-

treme east is a promontory which stands out and past which most incoming vessels sail.

**CHURCH BUILDING
DELAYED BY UNION**

RENO (Nev.), March 30.—Unless the contractors of Reno employ none but union labor the \$100,000 Catholic church which is being constructed in Reno may be delayed indefinitely. Father Thomas M. Tubman, head of the parish, refused to allow non-union men to work on the edifice today, and the contractors refused to revoke the open shop order even to satisfy the wish of the Catholic congregation. The labor trouble is particularly serious since an unnamed donor has offered to pay for the interior decorating provided the work is completed at once.

ELEVATOR BOY SAVES GIRLS.

NEW YORK, March 14.—One hundred girls employed at the candy factory of Arthur Essing, at 382 Pearl street, were at work today on the fourth and fifth floors when fire was discovered in the bottom of the elevator shaft, preventing their exit by the stairways. While some of the male employees fought the fire, Henry Coch, the elevator boy, ran his elevator to the top floor and said to the girls in as cool a manner as he could assume: "There is a fire in the basement. Maybe you had better let me take you down."

Reassured by his coolness the girls were saved from panic and Coch took five elevator loads of them to the first floor before the flames reached such a height in the elevator that he was compelled to abandon the car. On his last trip the fire burst into the car and burned his hands.

The girls who were not taken out by

Coch took to the roof and the fire escaped and reached the ground safely. The fire consumed tons of candy and the firemen were hampered by the dense smoke from it and by the bursting of 5 lengths of hose under high pressure. Traffic on the second avenue elevated road was stopped and the firemen fought the fire from that structure. The factory, a five-story building, was destroyed.

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